

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 SSM-03 MCT-01 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /088 W
-----102716 150200Z /64

R 141430Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1914
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
USMISSION SINAI
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT,US, IS
SUBJECT: REACTION TO DEPARTMENT'S STATEMENT ON FATAH RESPONSIBILITY

REF: TEL AVIV 3431

1. DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S INITIAL REFUSAL TO ATTRIBUTE RESPONSIBILITY FOR SATURDAY TERRORIST ATTACK TO PLO OR FATAH HAS HIT A SENSITIVE NERVE HERE. THE STATEMENT HAS BEEN PROMINENTLY PLAYED IN THE MEDIA (REFTEL) AND THE REACTION HAS BEEN VOCIFEROUSLY NEGATIVE; SPOKESMAN'S LATER STATEMENT WAS NOTED BUT WAS TOO LATE TO BE MUCH OF A REMEDY.

2. HAARETZ MILITARY CORRESPONDENT (SCHIFF) TOLD US HE HAD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RECEIVED TWO TELEPHONE CALLS FROM US-BASED ISRAELI JOURNALISTS FOLLOWING MAY 13 PRESS BRIEFING. BOTH TERMED SPOKESMAN EITHER UNINFORMED OR INSENSITIVE OR BOTH; SCHIFF ADDED THAT ISRAELI JOURNALISTS HAVE FOR SOME TIME BEEN UNHAPPY WITH QUALITY OF STATE DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFINGS. SCHIFF ALSO SAID THAT MEMBER OF PRIME MINISTER'S STAFF WITH WHOM HE SPOKE BELIEVED THAT

SPOKESMAN WAS NOT HIMSELF "PRO-PLO", BUT ONLY REPRESENTED THE ORGANIZATION FOR WHICH HE WORKED.

3. TYPICAL OF PRESS PLAY HERE MARCH 14 IS SCATHING MAARIV EDITORIAL ENTITLED "STUPIDITY OR LIES" WHICH INTERPRETS STATEMENT AS PART OF CONTINUING US EFFORT TO DEPICT THE PLO AS A MODERATE ORGANIZATION DESPITE THE DISTORTION OF REALITY THIS ENTAILS. THE PRESS CONNECTS THIS WITH PREVIOUS AMERICAN "MISSTATEMENTS" ON SAUDI NON-PARTICIPATION IN YOM KIPPUR WAR AND NON-INSTALLATION OF HAWK MISSILES AT TOBUK.

4. COMMENT: THE STATEMENT HAS BEEN MOST DAMAGING HERE TO US CREDIBILITY. BEGIN'S STRESS ON ISRAEL'S NEED FOR SELF-RELIANCE AND MINIMAL TRUST IN ASSURANCES AND COMMITMENTS OF OUTSIDE PARTIES (US) WILL BE REINFORCED THE ISRAELI PUBLIC ALMOST UNANIMOUSLY READS STATEMENT AS CYCINCAL ATTEMPT BY THE US TO DISTORT REALITY TO SUIT OUR POLITICAL ENDS.

VIETS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, FOREIGN INTEREST REPRESENTATION, TERRORISTS, UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
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Litigation History:
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